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Message Text

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22
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 PC-01 IO-13 ACDA-07 /093 W
---------- 112047
R 021438Z AUG 76
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0427
INFO RUTABA /AMCONSUL ASMARA 7509
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SANA
USCINCEUR
COMIDEASTFOR
CINCUSNAVEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 9071

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS PINT ET
SUBJECT: EXECUTIONS:THREE WEEKS LATER

REF: ADDIS 8773

1. FACTS LEADING UP TO AND SURROUNDING EXECUTIONS ANNOUNCED JULY 10 STILL REMAIN RATHER OBSCURE THREE WEEKS AFTER EVENT, AND WE THINK THEY LIKELY STAY THAT WAY. INDEED, THEY ARE NO LONGER BEING MUCH DISCUSSED EVEN WITHIN FOREIGN COMMUNITY.

2. IMPACT THUS FAR, HOWEVER, IS DIFFERENT MATTER. FOUR FURTHER EXRCUTIONS, TWO MERCHANTS AND TWO OFFICERS OF
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26TH BATTALION, HAVE REINFORCED IMPRESSION THAT DIRG IS QUITE

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PREPARED DEAL HARSHLY WITH SUSPECTED PLOTTERS, AGITATORS
AND "ECONOMIC SABOTEURS." IMPRESSION WE GET FROM ALL SIDES
IS THAT AMONG CIVILIAN POPULATION INCLUDING USUAL OPPONENTS OF
DIRG (STUDENTS, LABOR) THERE IS STRONG PERCEPTION THIS IS
GOOD TIME TO GO ABOUT ONE'S BUSINESS QUIETLY. RESULT IS
THAT ADDIS HAS BEEN EXCEPTIONALLY QUIET. CITY HAS BEEN
FULL OF RETURNED ZEMETCHA SEEKING WORK AND/OR EDUCATION,
BUT THEY HAVE BEEN BEHAVING IN VERY ORDERLY WAY. UNIVERSITY
OPENED FOR SUMMER SESSION AND HAS THUS FAR HAD NO INCIDENTS
DESPITE RASH OF RUMORS THAT ZEMETCHA WOULD CAUSE TROUBLE
(EPMG DEFUSED THIS PARTICULAR POTENTIAL FOR TROUBLE BY
ACCEPTING FORTH YEAR STUDENTS WHETHER OR NOT THEY HAD
COMPLETED THEIR ZEMETCHA OBLIGATIONS).

3. IMPACT ON MILITARY IS LESS CLEAR. MUTINY OF AIRBORNE
TROOPS FIZZLED AND SO DID LT. COL. BERHANU HAILE'S (26TH
BATTALION) EFFORT IN ASSAB. INDEED, HIS EXECUTION
BY HIS OWN TROOPS PROVIDED DIRG WITH EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY
TO PROPAGANDIZE LOYALTY OF MILITARY TO THE GOVERNMENT. AIR
FORCE, DESPITE RECURRENT RUMORS TO CONTRARY WHICH HAVE NOT
CHECKED OUT, APPEARS QUIET. SECOND DIVISION IN ASMARA
AND THIRD IN OGADEN HAVE MADE NO MOVE THAT WE AWARE OF
(NOR ANY FURTHER DEMANDS ON DIRG). SURFACE IMPRESSION
THEREFORE IS THAT MILITARY TOO HAVE DECIDED PLAY IT COOL.
NONETHELESS, WE PREFER RESERVE JUDGMENT. AIRBORNE AND
26TH BATTALION INCIDENTS INDICATE THAT THERE IS OR WAS
UNREST AMONG MILITARY ELEMENTS AND THAT IT MAY FLARE UP
AGAIN. CONGEN ASMARA REPORTS THAT SECOND DIVISION HQS
IS UPTIGHT, WHETHER FOR FEAR OF TROOP REPRISALS AGAINST
COMMAND STRUCTURE FOR DEATH OF GETACHEW NADEW, OR FEAR
THAT OTHERS WILL BE LINKED TO GETACHEW OR AIRBORNE MUNITY,
IS NOT CLEAR. ONE THING SEEMS APPARENT - THAT ISOLATED
AND DISORGANIZED EFFORTS TO CHALLENGE DIRG BY SINGLE UNITS
ARE NOT LIKELY TO SUCCEED. DANGER TO DIRG, OF COURSE,
BARRING OPEN REVOLT BY MAJOR COMMAND SUCH AS 2ND DIVISION
IS THAT DISSATISFACTION WILL SLOWLY SPREAD AND BECOME SO
PERVASIVE THAT ANOTHER INCIDENT MIGHT SPONTANEOUSLY RALLY
SEVERAL UNITS AT ONE TIME IF THEY ARE CONVINCED THEY NOT
ACTING ALONE.

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4. ECONOMICALLY, EXECUTIONS CONTINUE HAVE SALUTARY EFFECT
FROM DIRG'S POINT OF VIEW. TEFF IN ADDIS MARKET IS NOT
OLENTIFUL (FOR SEASONAL REASONS) BUT IT IS NO LONGER IN
SHORT SUPPLY. SHIPMENTS FROM GOJJAM PROVINCE (TRADITIONAL
SUPPLIER AT THIS TIME OF YEAR) HAVE RESUMED AND WE
UNDERSTAND THEY HAVE BEEN MYSTERIOUSLY AUGMENTED BY
STOCKS HELD BY INDIVIDUALS IN ADDIS ITSELF. WHEAT REMAINS
IN SHORT SUPPLY, BUT THIS NOT RESULT OF HOLDING BACK

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SUPPLIES FROM MARKET, AND EPMG IN ANY CASE HAS NOW ACTED
TO IMPORT SUBSTANTIAL QUANTITIES FROM ABROAD.

5. IN SHORT, THREE WEEKS AFTER EXECUTIONS ANNOUNCED, DIRG
CONTINUES GIVE OUTWARD IMPRESSION THAT THEY FEEL VERY
MUCH IN COMMAND. RURAL INSURGENCIES (SEPTEL TO FOLLOW)
CONTINUE, BUT WE JUDGE THEIR EFFECTS (EXCEPT IN ERITREA) AS
BEING ONE MORE MINOR IRRITANT RATHER THAN HAVING MAJOR INPACT ON
CENTIAL EVENTS. WHOLESALE EXECUTIONS OR EVEN ARRESTS HAVE NOT
MATERIALIZED SO FAR AS WE KNOW. INDEED CURRENT RUMOR
IS THAT KIROS ALEMAYEHU IS STILL ALIVE. HOW LONG
SITUATION WILL LAST REMAINS TO BE SEEN, BUT FOR PRESENT
WE JUDGE THAT MENGISTU AND COMPANY PROBABLY FEEL THAT
THEY HAVE SUCCESSFULLY SURMOUNTED ONE MORE CRITICAL PERIOD.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY PERSONNEL, PROVINCE, EXECUTIONS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ADDIS09071
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760298-0592
From: ADDIS ABABA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760898/aaaadhqw.tel
Line Count: 130
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 ADDIS ABABA 8773
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <24 AUG 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EXECUTIONS:THREE WEEKS LATER
TAGS: PINS, PINT, ET
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006